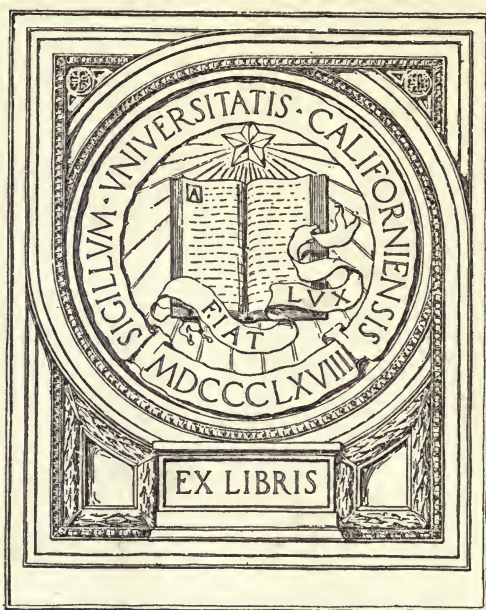


E

99

.N3M3

x



BANCROFT LIBRARY

08-8

# NAVAJO GAMBLING SONGS.

BY

Dr. WASHINGTON MATTHEWS, U. S. A.

1843-1903

---

[Reprinted from The American Anthropologist. January, 1889.]

---

WASHINGTON, D. C. :  
JUDD & DETWEILER, PRINTERS.  
1889.

*The Bancroft Library*

*No. 17083.*



15276 B

Bancroft Library THE

## AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST.

VOL. 2.

WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY, 1889.

No. 1.

## NAVAJO GAMBLING SONGS.

BY DR. WASHINGTON MATTHEWS, U. S. ARMY.

The Navajos have a great number of songs which have been handed down in the tribe for generations and whose forms are well established. Those songs, which pertain to their rites and mythology, are so numerous that I have no hope of ever making a collection that will approximate completeness.

In addition to these transmitted songs, they have countless improvisations, heard at all dances and social gatherings not of a religious character. The difficulties in the way of the Navajo improvisators may not seem to us very important when we learn that meaningless syllables may be added at will to fill out the verses, and that rhyming terminations are not required. Yet they undoubtedly have prosodical laws understood, if not formulated, to conform to which they are often obliged to take liberal poetic licenses and employ terms not used in ordinary conversation.

The songs selected for presentation here were sung in a game called *Kēsítce*,\* which, in the winter season, is the favorite game for stakes. Only a few can I give. To collect all, even of this particular set of songs, would take more time than I will, probably, ever be able to devote to all branches of Navajo ethnology. One old man, in reply to my question as to the number of songs sung in this game, replied that there were four thousand. Of course, this was an exaggeration and intended to be understood as such; but the statement was designed to convey some idea of the great number that existed. Another Indian, an inveterate old gambler, who had made *Kēsítce* "the study of his life," said that there was not a thing that walked or flew or crept or crawled in all the world (as

\* From *Kē*, moccasins, and *sítce*, side by side, parallel to one another in a row.

E 99

.N3 M3

X

m/f

4/24/86

known to the Navajos, of course) that had not at least one appropriate song in the game, and that many had more than one song. He further stated that it took him four years to learn all he knew.

I have not contented myself with hearing these songs from the mouth of one individual, but have had them sung to me by many persons from widely distant parts of the Navajo country—persons who had, perhaps, never exchanged a word with one another in their lives. The perfect uniformity with which they were repeated in most cases, and the close approach to uniformity in all other cases, were wonderful.

These, like all other transmitted songs of this tribe, depend on a legend for their explanation. Recited by themselves, they seem almost meaningless; sung in connection with the story they are intended to embellish, their significance is at once apparent. It is, therefore, necessary that I should tell something of the myth of the *Kesitcè*; and, in order that the myth may be fully understood, a brief description of the game must be given.

#### THE GAME OF THE KESITCÈ.

This is, to some extent, sacred in its nature, for the playing is confined to the winter, the only time when their myths may be told and their most important ceremonies conducted. It is practiced only during the dark hours. The real reason for this is probably that the stone used in the game cannot be hidden successfully by daylight; but if you ask an Indian why the game is played only at night, he will account for it by referring you to the myth and saying that he on whom the sun shines while he is engaged in the game will be struck blind. I have heard that on some occasions, when the stakes are heavy and the day begins to dawn on an undecided contest, they close all the apertures of the lodge with blankets, blacken the skin around their eyes, place a watch outside to prevent intrusion, and for a short time continue their sport.

The implements of the game are eight moccasins; a roundish stone or pebble about an inch and a half in diameter; a blanket used as a screen; a stick with which to strike the moccasins; a chip blackened on one side that they toss up to decide which party shall begin the game, and one hundred and two counters, each about nine inches long made of a stiff, slender root-leaf of the *Yucca angustifolia*. Two of these counters are notched on the margins.

The moccasins are buried in the ground so that only about an inch of their tops appear and they are filled to the ground level with powdered earth or sand. They are placed side by side a few inches apart in two rows, one on each side of the fire. The players are divided into two parties, each controlling one row of moccasins. When, by tossing up the chip, they have decided which party shall begin the lucky ones hold up a screen to conceal their operations and hide the ball in one of the moccasins, covering it well with sand.

When all is ready they lower the screen and allow that person to come forward whom their opponents have selected to find the ball. He strikes with a stick the moccasin in which he supposes the ball to lie. If his guess is correct he takes the stone, his comrades become the hiders and his opponents the seekers; but if he fails to indicate the place wherein the pebble is hid the hiders win some of the counters, the number won depending on the position of the moccasin struck and the position of the one containing the stone. Thus each party is always bound to win while it holds the stone and always bound to lose while its opponent holds it.

The system of counting is rather intricate, and though I perfectly comprehend it I do not consider a full description of it in this connection as necessary to the proper understanding of the myth. It will suffice to say that the number of counters lost at any one unsuccessful guess can only be either four, six, or ten; these are the only "counts" in the game.

When the game begins the counters are held by some uninterested spectator and handed to either side according as it wins. When this original holder has given all the counters out, the winners take from the losers. When one side has won all the counters the game is done. The original holder parts with the two notched counters, called "grandmothers," last. One of the party receiving them sticks them up in the rafters of the *hogan* (lodge) and says to them "Go seek your grandchildren" (*i. e.* bring the other counters back to our side). The possession of the "grandmothers" is supposed to bring good luck.

A good knowledge of the songs is thought to assist the gamblers in their work, probably under the impression that the spirits of the primeval animal gods are there to help such as sing of them. A song begun during an "inning" (to borrow a term from the field) must be continued while the inning last. Should this inning be



short it is not considered lucky to sing the same song again during the game.

EPITOME OF THE MYTH OF THE KESITCE.

In the ancient days there were, as there are now, some animals who saw better, could hunt better, and were altogether happier in the darkness than in the light; and there were others who liked not the darkness and were happy only in the light of day. The animals of the night wished it would remain dark forever and the animals of the day wished that the sun would shine forever. At last they met in council in the twilight to talk the matter over and the council resolved that they should play a game by hiding a stone in a moccasin (as in the game now called *Kesitce*) to settle their differences. If the night animals won the sun should never rise again, if the day animals succeeded never more should it set. So when night fell they lit a fire and commenced the game.

In order to determine which side should first hide the stone they took a small weather-stained fragment of wood and rubbed one side with charcoal. They tossed it up; if it fell with the black side up the nocturnal party were to begin, but it fell with the gray side up and those of the diurnal side took the stone. These raised a blanket to conceal their operations and sang a song, which is sung to this day by the Navajos when they raise the screen in this game [No. 1, Screen Song], and the game went on.

They commenced the game with only one hundred counters but a little whitish, old-looking snake called *lic-bitcòi*, i. e. maternal grandmother of the snakes, said they ought to have two more counters. Therefore they made two, notched them so that they would look like snakes and called them *bitcòi*, maternal grandmothers, which name the two notched counters used in the game still bear.

The cunning Coyote would not cast his lot permanently with either side. He usually stood between the contending parties, but occasionally went over to one side or the other as the tide of fortune seemed to turn.

Some of the genii of those days joined the animals in this contest. On the side of the night animals was the great destroyer *Yeitso*, the best guesser of all, who soon took the stone away from the day animals. Whenever the latter found it in the moccasins of their moon-loving enemies they could not hold it long for the shrewd-guessing



*Yeitso* would recover it. They lost heavily and began to tremble for their chances, when some one proposed to them to call in the aid of the gopher, *nasizi*. He dug a tunnel under the moccasins leading from one to another and when *Yeitso* would guess the right moccasin the gopher, unseen by all, would transfer the stone to another place [See Song No. 7]. Thus was *Yeitso* deceived, the day party retrieved their losses and sang a taunting song of him [No. 2, *Yeitso* Song].

But when they had won back nearly all the counters, luck appeared to again desert them. The noctivagant beasts came into possession of the pebble, and kept it so long that it seemed as if their opponents could never regain it. Guess as cleverly as they might, the stone was not to be found in the moccasin indicated by those who longed for an eternal day. Then the owl sang a song expressive of his desires [No. 4, *Owl's* Song], and when he had done, one of the wind-gods whispered into the ear of one of the diurnal party that the owl held the stone in his claws all the time, and never allowed it to be buried in the moccasin. So, when next the screen was withdrawn, the enlightened day animal advanced, and, instead of striking a moccasin, struck the owl's claws, and the hidden stone dropped out on the ground.

After this the game proceeded with little advantage to either side, and the animals turned their attention to composing songs about the personal peculiarities, habits, and history of their opponents, just as in social dances to-day the Navajos ridicule one another in song. Thus all the songs relating to animals [Nos. 7 *ad fin.*], which form the great majority of the songs of the *Kesitce*, originated.

Later the players began to grow drowsy and tired and somewhat indifferent to the game, and again the wind-god whispered—this time into the ear of the magpie—and said, "Sing a song of the morning," whereat the magpie sang his song [No. 5]. As he uttered the last words, "*Qa-yel-ká! Qa-yel-ká!*" (It dawns! It dawns!) the players looked forth and beheld the pale streak of dawn along the eastern horizon. Then all hastily picked up their counters and blankets and fled, each to his proper home—one to the forest, another to the desert, this to the gully, that to the rocks.

The bear had lent his moccasins to be used in the game. They were, therefore, partly buried in the ground. In his haste to be off he put them on wrong—the right moccasin on the left foot, and

*vice versa*; and this is why the bear's feet are now misshapen. His coat was then as black as midnight, but he dwelt on top of a high mountain, and was so late in getting back to his lair that the red beams of the rising sun shone upon him, imparting their ruddy hue to the tips of his hairs, and thus it is that the bear's hair is tipped with red to this day.

The home of the wood-rat, *létso*, was a long way off, and he ran so far and so fast to get there that he raised great blisters on his feet, and this accounts for the callosities we see now on the soles of the rat.

So the day dawned on the undecided game. As the animals never met again to play for the same stakes, the original alternation of day and night has never been changed.

#### TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF SONGS OF THE KESITCE.

NOTE.—In the Navajo words as they appear in this paper the vowels have the continental sounds. There is only one diphthong, *ai*; ' denotes an aspirated vowel; *c* has the sound of *sh* in *shine*; *d* before a vowel has the sound of *th* in *this*; *j* has the French sound; *l* is always aspirated, as if spelled *hl*; *n* above the line (<sup>n</sup>) is nasal; *q* has the sound of German *ch* in *machen*; *t* before a vowel has the sound of *th* in *thing*; the other letters have the ordinary English sounds.

#### NO. I.—SCREEN SONG.

*Atcá' dilpá'li taosklè,*  
*Atcá' dilpá'li taosklè.*  
*Kolagà ainà.*

#### TRANSLATION.

The old screen hangs in front  
 The old screen hangs in front.

#### NOTES.

*atcá'*, in front of; before.

*dilpá'li*, it hangs. This is applicable only to something broad and flexible that hangs temporarily. Of a curtain or *portière* that hangs permanently they say *nípá'li*.

*taosklè*, something old, frayed, or worn; usually applied only to textile fabrics and clothing; ragged.

*kolagà ainà* is probably meaningless.

## No. 2.—YEITSO SONG.

*Yèitso tcinila' nieè,*  
*Tcal azdetsèl tcini "Haèna!"*  
*Yèitso tcinila' nieè,*  
*Tcal azdetsèl tcini "Haèna! Hanè!"*  
*"Cá'nenánoa'" niyeko.*  
*Tcal azdetsèl tcini "Haèna! Hanè!"*

## TRANSLATION.

Thus says *Yèitso*,  
 Weeping while he strikes (at the moccasins,) he says, "Alas!"  
 Thus says *Yèitso*,  
 Weeping while he strikes, he says, "Alas! Alas!"  
 "Put it ye back for me (where it was before)" he says.  
 Weeping while he strikes, he says, "Alas! Alas!"

## NOTES.

*Yèitso*, an important character in Navajo mythology, a giant who was slain by the children of the Sun.

*tcinila'*, thus he says, exactly thus he says.

*tcal*, he cries (while doing something else)—synchronal form.

*azdetsèl*, he is striking at it.

*tcini*, he says. This word may be said of one either absent or present. *Vide infra*, *niyeko*.

*haèna! hanè'!* exclamations of *Yèitso* expressive of his chagrin and disappointment; herhaps equivalent to Alas!

*cá'nenánoa*, *ca'nána*, means "replace it all ye for me," and conveys the idea that it must be replaced exactly where it was before. For the extra syllable *ne* I know no meaning. I have been told by the Indians it is "just to make out the song." The luckless *Yèitso* hoped he might find the stone if his opponents were silly enough to do as he requested.

*niyeko*. Here the singer takes poetic license with the word *nigo*, he says—*i. e.*, some one absent or at a distance says. *Yèitso* is supposed to make his plea while still on the opposite side of the fire, before he approaches to seek the stone. But he says "Alas!" after he comes over.



## No. 3.—YEBITCAI SONG.

*Yenaqaniya kejòji ke,*  
*Yenaqaniya ooò kejòji ke eè,*  
*Yenaqaniya aà,*  
*Apàna bitsidi alkiajdolkègo,*  
*Yenaqaniya kejòji ke, yenaqania kejòji ke,*  
*Yenaqaniya aà.*

## TRANSLATION.

He comes to us on toes and feet,  
 He comes to us on toes and feet,  
 He comes to us on toes and feet,  
 With coat upon coat of fine-dressed skin,  
 He comes to us on toes and feet, he comes to us on toes and feet,  
 He comes to us.

## NOTES.

*yenaqaniya*, that by means of which one arrives, the "means of transportation." *ye*, a prefix forming with verbs nouns denoting means of motion. *naqaniya*, he arrives at our house, he reaches us, he comes to us.

*kejòj*, toes.

*ke*, foot, feet.

*apàna*, buckskin.

*bitsidi*, soft, pliable, devoid of stiffness; said of finely-dressed buckskin, dead grass, etc.

*alkiajdolkègo*, in layers on the person; refers to layers or coats of flexible material, one on top of another, worn on the body.

*Yèbitcai*, one of the genii or demigods, came late to the game and those who preceded him sang this song. In the dance of the *Yèbitcai* he who enacts this character moves with a noisy, shuffling gait and wears coats of fine buckskin, while the other dancers are nearly naked.

## No. 4.—OWL'S SONG.

*To-yolkál-nisin-da,*  
*To-yolkál-nisin-da.*  
*Hihì hihì hihì.*

## TRANSLATION.

I wish not the end of all the nights,  
or,  
I wish not the end of the last night.

NOTES.

*tò-da*, a negative adverb commonly divided so that the first syllable shall precede, and the last syllable succeed, the verb or sentence which it qualifies. Here we have an example of this arrangement.

*yolkal*, the end of all the nights, the end of the last night; said of the approach of dawn on the last night of any period as at the end of a festival. The owl here speaks of the last night of all time.

*nisin*, I wish, I desire. This is usually pronounced *insin*. Transpositions for euphony are common in the Navajo language.

No. 5.—MAGPIE SONG.

*A'a'á'i-ne! A'a'á'i-ne!*  
*Ya'a'nì-ainè! Ya'a'nì-ainè! Kòya-ainè*  
*Bitá' alkáigi bikè yiská' ne.*  
*Oayelká'! Oayelká'!*

## TRANSLATION.

The magpie! The magpie! Here underneath  
In the white of his wings are the footsteps of morning.  
It dawns! It dawns!

NOTES.

*a'a'á'i* and *ya'a'i* are imitations of the magpie's call; *a'a'i* is the onomatopoeic name of the magpie.

*kôya*, here beneath, here below, or within; probably refers to a hut or cavern in which the game was supposed to be played.

*bitá'*, his wings.

*alkàigi*, in the white part; from *kai* or *lakài*, white.

*bikè*, his feet; hence, also, his footsteps, his trail.

*yiská'*, morning, the morrow.

*qayelká'*, it dawns, it is morning.

*ne* and *ainè* seem to have no meaning.

The black quills of the magpie's wings are margined with white, and thus is the black sky of night bordered at daybreak ; hence, the simile in the song.

In the myth, as related to me, it is stated that the magpie sang this song ; but, in the language of the song, he is referred to in the third person.

No. 6.—CHICKEN HAWK'S SONG.

*Yoò qalaenà, yoò qalaenà, yoò qalaenà*  
*Qalaèna enà, qalaèna enò, yoò ayeè, he'ná', he'ná' !*  
*Naestcà gastì<sup>n</sup> cizditi<sup>n</sup>i.*  
*Ta'cijá' ka' nihísyé ; ailapà cizditi<sup>n</sup>i.*

TRANSLATION.

The old owl hates me.

When alone I always bring home abundance of rabbits, that is why he hates me.

NOTES.

The first two lines have probably no meaning.

*naēstcà*, the great horned owl, *Bubo Virginianus*.

*gastì<sup>n</sup>* : *adj.*, old ; *noun*, chief, elder. The two words *naestca gastin* I have rendered "old owl," but they might be translated owl-chief or ancient of the owls.

*cizditi<sup>n</sup>i*, he hates me ; apparently an obsolete or poetic form ; *cizditi<sup>n</sup>i* is the ordinary, colloquial form.

*ta'cijá'*, I alone, I by myself.

*ka'*, the little wood rabbit, the "cotton-tail."

*nihi<sup>n</sup>syé*, I bring game home ; said when an animal carries game back to its nest or den or a man carries it home (in quantities and habitually).

*ailapà*, for that reason, therefore.

This song was sung by the chicken hawk (*Accipiter Cooperi*), called by the Navajos *tsi<sup>n</sup>ya ildjehe*, or he who hunts under the trees. The owl and the hawk were out hunting at the same time. The owl saw a rabbit and flew heavily towards it to catch it. The hawk saw it at the same time, swooped nimbly down, and bore it away before the owl could reach it. When they met at the game the owl, angry with the hawk for his discourtesy, would not look at the latter or speak to him.



## No. 7.—GOPHER SONG.

*Naasizi tsé'go i<sup>n</sup>, i<sup>n</sup>, i<sup>n</sup>,  
 Naasizi tsé'go i<sup>n</sup>, i<sup>n</sup>, i<sup>n</sup>,  
 Yintsel! Yintsel! nieè,  
 A'ha'èi a'ha'èi a'ha' ie.*

## TRANSLATION.

Gopher sees where the stone is,  
 Gopher sees where the stone is.  
 Strike on! Strike on!

## NOTES.

*nasizi* or *nasisi*, one or more species of pouched gopher, probably *Thomomys*. In the song an extra syllable is added for poetic requirements.

*tsé'go*, to the stone, in the direction of the stone (*tse'*)—*i. e.*, the stone hidden in the moccasin during the game.

*i<sup>n</sup>*, he sees.

*yintsel*, go on striking it; literally, continue chopping (something lying on the ground). The motion of striking the moccasin in this game resembles that of chopping a prostrate stick.

As I have intimated, this song was sung by the diurnal party when the gopher was fraudulently changing the position of the stone and *Yeitso* was fruitlessly striking the moccasins.

## No. 8.—ELK SONG.

*Nisa nagá' i ye-ye-yè. Nisa nagá' i ye-ye-yè. Nisa nagá' i ye.  
 Nàtseli, naapitsilqal; tádi nagá'  
 Kolacìnìa. Kolacinia. Kolacinia.*

## TRANSLATION.

He wanders far. He wanders far. He wanders far.  
 The elk, I knocked him down, but still he wanders.  
 Let him go. Let him go. Let him go.

## NOTES.

*nisa* or *niza*, far; this form refers to motion, not to position.  
*nagá'* [*nàga*], he travels, he roams, he wanders.

*nàtselì*, seems to be an old name for the elk (now called *tse*). The Apaches, a tribe cognate to the Navajos, apply, I am told, this term to a steer.

*naapitsilqal*, I knocked him down with a club or heavy instrument. *na*, a prefix (seen in *nánigo*, across) denoting that the blow is delivered horizontally; *bi* or *pi*, him; *tsil* implies that the stroke felled him; *qal* notes the action performed in giving one forcible stroke with some heavy implement, as a club.

*tádi*, still, yet.

*kolacínla*, said to mean let him go, or I let him go, I allowed him to depart (*not* I released him); but the etymology is somewhat obscure to me; apparently an obsolete or poetic form.

One informant has told me that this was sung by one of the ancient genii named *Tònēnīlì*. One day when hunting he met the elk, knocked him down and thought he was dead, but after awhile elk rose and walked off and *Tonenili*, taking pity on him, let him have his life. When he met elk afterwards at the game he sang this song of the adventure.

#### No. 9.—CICADA SONG.

*Wonistcid aìnà,*  
*Wonistcid aìnà,*  
*Qàni<sup>n</sup> qastid aìnà,*  
*Hiya akè aìnà,*  
*Hiya akè haiyè niyè.*

#### TRANSLATION.

Cicada! Cicada! His nostrils are gone.

#### NOTES.

*wonistcid*, the locust or cicada.

*qàni<sup>n</sup>*, nostrils, his nostrils.

*qastid*, an abbreviation of *aqastid*, disappeared, obliterated by being filled up. If an arroyo becomes filled by sand washing into it, or if a cellar is filled by natural processes, they say *aqastid*.

The other sounds have no meaning.

It is related that when the cicada came to the game some scanned his face closely to see if they were acquainted with him. They ob-

served that he had eyes and mouth like every one else but no nostrils. They thought he must once have had them, but that they had probably disappeared by a growth of the flesh.

In this song we have a rhyme of the significant words.

No. 10.—ANTELOPE SONG.

*Ainà. Lapá' owò'! Lapá' owò'*  
*Ainà. Tsidì naqotinyagi*  
*Tcádi nagá'ye,*  
*Hi' owò', hi' owò', hi' owò', he.*

TRANSLATION.

The dun one, lo! The dun one, lo!  
 Truly in distant glade below  
 Wanders the antelope.

Bancroft Library

NOTES.

*lapá'*, pale brown, drab, dun.

*tsidì* [*tsidi*, *tsida*], surely, certainly, truly. Here it means that, although the antelope may be far away, the singer is sure he recognizes him.

*naqotinyagi*, in a distant glade below the observer (who is supposed to stand on a hill); *na* here indicates distance; *qoti'* is said of a space seen through an opening, as a room seen through a window; here it is said to refer to a glade; *ya*, below; *gi*, in.

*tcádi*, the American antelope.

*nagá'ye* [*nàga*, *nagái*], he travels, he wanders.

The other expressions are exclamatory or have no significance.

No. 11.—BEAR SONG.

*Ti'itì', ti'itè, ti'itì', ti'itè,*  
*Ti'itì' benacá' qàgode niya?*  
*Ti'itì', ti'itè, ti'itì', ti'itè,*  
*Ti'itì' benacá' qaditlò' qàgode niya?*

TRANSLATION.

(With) these four, these four, these four, these four,  
 These four things to walk with, whence comes he?

(With) these four, these four, these four, these four,  
 These four shaggy things to walk with, whence comes he?



## NOTES.

*ti<sup>n</sup>iiti'*, these four; *ti<sup>n</sup>* or *ti<sup>n</sup>i*, four; *ti'*, this, these. The last syllable is changed by poetic license to *tè* alternately.

*benaca'*, something to walk with, a figurative or jocose expression for legs.

*qaditlò'*, hairy, shaggy, a shaggy coat.

*qàgode*, from what direction, whence.

*niya*, he arrives, he comes here.

This is sung with much emphasis and often in time to motions of head and arms intended to imitate a bear walking.

## No. 12.—BADGER SONG.

*Ainà,*

*Nahastcit siti' iii, nahastcit siti' na,*

*Nahastcit siti' iii, nahastcit siti' na;*

*“Waurr” —aaa, nigo, siti' na;*

*Bità indsokàigo siti' na.*

## TRANSLATION.

Badger is lying down, badger is lying down,

Badger is lying down, badger is lying down;

*“Waurr,”* he says, lying down;

With a white streak down his forehead, lying down.

## NOTES.

*nahastcit*, the American badger.

*siti'*, he is lying down.

*“waurr,”* an imitation of the badger's growl.

*nigo*, thus he says.

*bità*, his forehead.

*indsokài*, a white streak running down; said of a “blaze” on a horse's nose; a perpendicular white mark on a wall or a bluff, &c.

## No. 13.—SNAKE SONG.

*Yùnani atcitèl, yùnani atcitèel, yunani atcitèèl-e.*

*Qàdisislàci<sup>n</sup>, qàdisislàci<sup>n</sup>.*

## TRANSLATION.

He threw him yonder, he threw him yonder, he threw him yonder.  
I wonder where he lies, I wonder where he lies.

## NOTES.

*yùnani*, yonder, across, on the other side.

*atcitèl*, he threw him. The form of the verb here shows that the object is long and flexible, as a snake or a rope.

*qadisislàci*<sup>n</sup>, I wonder where he lies. *qadi*, where; *ci* or *si*, I; *silà'*, it lies (*ci* and *silà'* are contracted into *sislà*); *ci*<sup>n</sup> or *cin* denotes doubt and conjecture.

This was sung about a snake. Its name does not appear, but the forms of the verbs indicate the subject of the song, a snake being, probably, the only animal to which they could well refer. A Navajo rarely kills a snake. If one lies in his way, he puts a stick under it and flings it to a distance. At the game a snake was thus thrown by one party over among the other party, and this act gave origin to the song.

## No. 14.—GROUND-SQUIRREL SONG. I.

*Qazài biègi kòo sizinèe,*  
*Qazài biègi kòo sizinèe,*  
*Altsòzi ko sizinì, notòzi ko sizinì.*  
*Hià àneya, hià àneya.*

## TRANSLATION.

The squirrel in his shirt stands up there,  
 The squirrel in his shirt stands up there;  
 Slender, he stands up there; striped, he stands up there.

## NOTES.

*qazài*, some species of striped ground squirrel, probably a *Spermophilus*.

*biègi*, in his shirt; *bi*, his; *e*, shirt; *gi*, in.

*ko*, there, in the place pointed to; lengthened by one syllable for poetic reasons.

*sizinì*, he stands up; the accent is changed for prosodical reasons.

*altsòzi*, slender, slim; said of wire, etc.

*notòzi*, striped, marked with long, narrow stripes.

## No. 15.—GROUND SQUIRREL SONG. II.

*Qazài nasinèstsin, nasinèstsin.*  
*Tsidiyaicpice ca'dadécni;*  
*Kayèl indèilgot, indèilgot.*

## TRANSLATION.

Squirrel struck me, he struck me.  
The titmice are angry on my account;  
They put their quivers on.

## NOTES.

*qazai*, ground squirrel. See Song No. 14.

*nasinéstsin*, he struck me. The form of the verb denotes that several blows were delivered horizontally without a weapon.

*tsidiyaicpice*, the specific name of a very small bird, which I have not identified; I believe it to be a titmouse. The name refers to their mode of flight in close flocks. *tsidi*, a bird.

*cadadécni*, they are angry on my account, for me; *literally*, they close their eyes for me.

*kayèl*, a quiver; the combination of bow case and quiver in which the Indian carries his weapons.

*indèilgot*. I am not certain of the etymology of this word. It is said to mean that they put their quivers on. The last line, as a whole, is said to mean "they prepare for war;" as we would say, "they gird their armor on."

This ironic song was sung by one of the big animals in derision of smaller beings who attended the game.

## No. 16.—LITTLE OWL SONG.

*Ainà*

*Tánaocliyàgi bitcà yaà o o o,* } Repeat twice  
*Tánaocliyàgi bitcà yaà ai ai è.* } or oftener.

## TRANSLATION.

Do I expect (to find) him down there? His hat sticks up.

## NOTES.

*aina*, has no meaning; it is an expression used in beginning a song by some people; in most cases it may be omitted at pleasure.

*tánaocliyàgi*, do I expect him there? Probably I may hope (to see) him there. *ta*, a prefix denoting interrogation or doubt. *naocli*, I expect, I look for him. If I expect a visitor I say *naocli*. *yàgi*, a locative suffix; *ya*, below; *gi*, in.

*bitcà*, his hat—*i. e.*, his crest.

*yaà*, it sticks up.



This was sung of the burrowing owl, *glo'bitqá-nastca*, which signifies "owl-among-the-prairie-dogs." This owl was an obscure little individual at the game and it was difficult to see him, but the singer sees his little crest sticking up over the surface of the earth (half hidden, as his crest is when he stands at the mouth of his burrow), and thinks he may find him there.

## No. 17.—WILD-CAT SONG. I.

*Nactùì bikè dìni, yooìni yaàni,*  
*Nactùì bikè dìni, yooìni ya.*

## TRANSLATION.

Wild-cat's foot is sore,  
 Wild-cat's foot is sore.

## NOTES.

*nactùì*, the American wild-cat, *Lynx rufus*.

*bikè*, his foot, his feet.

*dìni*, it aches, it pains, it is sore.

The rest has no meaning.

This was sung in ridicule of the cautious, delicate tread of the wild-cat, who walks as if his feet were sore.

## No. 18.—WILD-CAT SONG. II.

*Ainà, nactùì bitcilyá,*  
*Nactùì bitcilyá;*  
*Qatlè qalkéj.*

## TRANSLATION.

He looks like a wild-cat,  
 He looks like a wild-cat;  
 The insides of his thighs are striped.

## NOTES.

*nactùì*, the American wild-cat.

*bitcilyá*, he looks like, his appearance is (that of).

*qatlè*, the insides of his thighs.

*qalkéj*, spotted, mottled, marked with short stripes or bars; said of an animate object.

*qatlè qalkéj*, refers to the peculiar markings on the inside of the cat's thighs.

## No. 19.—WILD-CAT SONG. III.

*Nactui ù tókà'le e,*  
*Nactui ù tókà'le e,*  
*Yàgo najdìlgòle;*  
*Qàtce indìcgòle;*  
*"Ràuu" cìlnìle e.*

## TRANSLATION.

The wild-cat was walking,  
 The wild-cat was walking,  
 He began to run down;  
 I ran towards him;  
 "Ràuu," said he to me.

## NOTES.

*nactui*, the American wild-cat.

*tókà'le*, he was walking; said of one who is walking at a distance, not beside the speaker.

*yàgo*, downwards, down [the hill understood].

*najdìlgòle*, he began to run. The syllables *najdi* indicate the commencement of an action that continues some time.

*qàtce*, towards (a living object).

*indìcgòle*, I ran at or to him.

*ràuu*, an imitation of the wild-cat's growl.

*cìlnìle*, he said to me.

## No. 20.—DOVE SONG. I.

*Ainà,*  
*Bide etàe, bide etàe ee,*  
*Bide etàe, bide etàe eee,*  
*Tàni-qokàitce etàe ee.*  
*A-ài a-ài-è a-ài a-ài-è.*

## TRANSLATION.

The dove flies, the dove flies,  
 The dove flies, the dove flies,  
 Towards the white alkali flat he flies.

## NOTES.

*bide*, an abbreviation of *qacbide* or *qacpide*, the mourning dove.

*etáge*, it flies.

*táni-gokàitce*, toward the white alkali flat; *táni*, that white saline incrustation on the ground known throughout the arid region of the United States as alkali; *qokai* (from the root *kai*), white on the ground; *tce*, towards, in the direction of.

No. 21.—DOVE SONG. II.

*Woc woc naidilàaa,*  
*Woc woc naidilòoo,*  
*Woc woc naidilàaa,*  
*Ke litci naidilàaa,*  
*Tsinolkàji naidilàaa,*  
*Woc woc naidilòoo.*

TRANSLATION.

Coo coo picks them up,  
 Coo coo picks them up,  
 Coo coo picks them up,  
 Red-moccasin picks them up,  
 Glossy-locks picks them up,  
 Coo coo picks them up.

NOTES.

*woc woc*, an imitation of the voice of the dove, “coo;” used here as a nickname for the dove, as are also the expressions red-moccasin and glossy-locks.

*naidilà* [*naidilà'*], he picks them (seeds) up.

*ke*, feet, foot, moccasin.

*litci*, red; the duplication of the last syllable is a poetic license. *ke litci* might be translated “red feet,” but the given translation is more correct, considering the form the adjective takes.

*tsinolkàji*, glossy locks; said of a person's hair when neatly combed and well oiled; here said figuratively of the beautiful shining head of the dove.











